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For Immediate Release...

Corrections News

July 18, 2006

Statement from Department Director Larry Crawford Regarding Judge Whipple's Inmate Abortion Ruling

"I am deeply disappointed by the federal court decision handed down today. The court's ruling means that the Department of Corrections will be required to transport prisoners from Vandalia to St. Louis so they can have elective abortions. Any time an inmate is transported outside the boundaries of a prison, serious security interests are impacted. There is the security concern that the inmate may use this as an opportunity to escape. Security at our institutions is also an issue, because the Judge's ruling would involve pulling officers from their regular duties at the prison, which would reduce security at WERDCC in Vandalia. Moreover, taking inmates to St. Louis to obtain an abortion that isn't medically necessary also hinders the transport of other inmates for medically necessary purposes. This Department doesn't transport inmates for any other elective medical procedures. We intend to ask the Attorney General to appeal this ruling."